

CITIZEN'S TRANSPORTATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE
Arizona Department of Transportation
206 S. 17th Avenue, #145-147

Meeting Minutes
January 20, 2004

A Citizen's Transportation Oversight Committee (CTOC) meeting was held at the Arizona Department of Transportation, 206 South 17th Avenue, Board Room 145-147, Phoenix, Arizona on January 20, 2004 with Chairperson Roc Arnett presiding.

Members Present:

Roc Arnett, Chairperson
Dwight Amery, Member-at-Large
Ron Gawlitta, Maricopa County District 3
Jim Lykins, Maricopa County District 2
Paul Schwartz, Maricopa County District 4

Members Absent:

Tom Liddy, Maricopa County District 1

Others Present:

John McGee, Chief Financial Officer
Elizabeth Neville, Regional Freeway Sys.
Carol Slaker, Sr. Trans. Planner
Bill Hayden, Special Assist. RFS
Kwi-Sung Kang, Trans. Engineer
Ed Johnson, Citizen

Dan Lance, State Eng. Office
Kevin Biesty, Legislative Services
Sandra Quijada, Admin. Assist.
William "Blue" Crowley, Citizen
Mike Kies, CH2M Hill
Joe Ryan, Citizen

1. Call To Order:

Chairperson Arnett called the Citizen's Transportation Oversight Committee meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

2. Approval of Minutes for November 18, 2003:

Chairperson Arnett called for a motion. Jim Lykins moved to approve the minutes of the November 18, 2003 meeting. Dwight Amery seconded the motion.

3. Staff Report:

Bill Hayden, ADOT, reported the following information:

- Tom Liddy of Maricopa County District 1, will be resigning his position as a CTOC Board member due to unforeseen work obligations. Ben Bethal has been approved as our new Board member of Maricopa County District 5.
- The New Regional Transportation Plan to Guide Transportation for 20 Years was distributed to the Board members.
- MAG, Regional Public Transit Authority, and ADOT representatives attended a luncheon at the Capitol on January 14, in which members of the Legislature were provided information about the upcoming sales tax extension.
- Members were provided with a report summarizing the five transit bills being debated in the House and Senate. The House Transportation Committee meeting yesterday resulted in a unanimous vote by the members in support of Representative Pierce's Omnibus bill. The Committee Chairperson allowed dialog, without commentary, from all those present. The Senate Natural Resource and Transportation Committee is now hearing testimony on the bill. Like the House, the Senate Committee is debating whether one bill should be presented to the voters. Whether the election should be held on May 18 or with the General Election in November, and whether the light rail component should be separated from the highways/streets and regional bus transit portion of the bill.
- Copies of an editorial by Mayor Guiliano were distributed. His position has always been strong that the light rail component of the bill should be kept as part of the larger Omnibus bill.
- Copies of an Independent Accountant's Report on Applying Agreed-Upon Procedures prepared by Deloitte & Touche, LLP were distributed. The audit found no exceptions or major errors, and that the total expenditures to date for the project did not exceed the budgeted amount per the MAG Program, plus third-party contributions and approved budget increases.
- A summary of major projects, including those under construction, design projects, and rubberized asphalt projects, was provided to the Committee.
- Santan Freeway, Arizona Avenue to Gilbert Avenue: Awarded to Pulice Construction for \$47.7 million. Construction should begin next month. This project represents the completion of the Santan Freeway in the City of Chandler.
- Red Mountain Freeway, Higley to Power Road: Awarded to Sundt Construction for \$22.8 million. Work will begin in March and be completed in mid-2005.
- Santan Freeway, Baseline to Elliott: Awarded to Pulice Construction for \$37.9 million. This segment is very expensive because it includes the transition between the freeway at Baseline Road and the major interchange at US 60 and the Santan/Red Mountain Freeway.

The following questions and comments were made:

- Mr. Gawlitta expressed his opinion that the public meetings are nothing more than propaganda, stating he has never heard a comment on behalf of a citizen participant that did not support Light Rail. He said those speaking out against Light Rail are marginalized and described as being uninformed. He asked for an honest, open, public meeting where all ideas are considered.
- Joe Ryan, citizen, asked if it would be appropriate for CTOC to raise a question if he had evidence that coding of the expenditures was incorrect. Mr. Arnett asked

Mr. Ryan to write a letter to the Committee outlining his concerns and describing the evidence.

4. I-10 Widening Study:

Mike Kies, Trans. Business Dev. Engineer of CH2M Hill, updated the Committee on the I-10 Widening Study. The purpose of the study is to develop a design concept that adds main line capacity to I-10, decreases the potential for accidents, and improves the Gila River Bridge crossing. Traffic congestion from the Loop 202 to SR 387 is anticipated to be at Level of Service (F) by 2025 if no improvements are made to I-10. Three locations along the corridor have been identified as having a higher potential for accidents: 1) the north end from Maricopa Road to the Loop 202; 2) the Gila River crossings; and 3) the I-8 area. A safety improvement was made at the SR 84 Interchange. With regard to the Gila River Crossing Bridges, two events in the past 20 to 25 years have threatened to flood the freeway. The crossings will be upgraded to the 50 year flood event level and the cross sections will be expanded to help increase safety. Upgrading to the 100 year flood event level may be done if it appears doing so will take minimal effort. There has been some consensus to widen the segment north of Riggs Road to four lanes in each direction, plus an HOV lane and that the median be filled in with a concrete barrier. The suggestion for the segment south of Riggs Road is to widen to four lanes but to keep the freeway's rural character by maintaining the large open median. The vision is to have four lanes in each direction on I-10 between Phoenix and Tucson.

Mr. Kies stated the main issue with the plan is that ADOT does not own the land in which the I-10 resides across the Gila River Indian Community. He explained a paragraph in the State's lease concerning the implementation of frontage roads along I-10 states that, at such time that the adjacent land warrants, ADOT agrees to permit the construction of frontage roads within the right-of-way limits of Interstate 10. He said widening I-10 will no longer allow frontage roads to be placed within the existing right-of-way. He said the paragraph goes on to say that frontage roads will be constructed to State Highway Standards, pointing out the standards have changed significantly since the time the lease was written. He stated Mr. Lewis has concluded that current design standards would not allow frontage roads. He said, consequently, there has been a lot of controversy between ADOT and the Gila River Indian Community. The study approach was revised in 2002 to include an access plan for the Gila River Indian Community and an access workshop was held to discuss access issues in March 2003. He stated, over the years, they have gained insight as to why the Indian Community wanted the frontage road: 1) to provide access to the land along the freeway, promoting development; and 2) to provide an alternative route to using the freeway. The Indian Community provided a list of requests, including constructing two-way frontage roads throughout the Community and improving many existing interchanges and providing new interchanges at various locations. We are working with the Community to gain a better understanding of their access needs in hopes of widening the freeway without implementing frontage roads in the existing right-of-way. We are in the midst of an extensive Community outreach effort, attending district meetings and encouraging the Community to attend their district open houses and meetings. We hope to have a Tribal Council working session in March and to ask the Tribal Council for a resolution in September.

Mr. Kies referred the Committee to their website for more detailed information.

The following questions and comments were made:

- Chairperson Arnett asked what is the rationale for not installing a barrier in the median south of Riggs Road. Mr. Kies explained their design does not preclude a cable barrier, however FHWA and ADOT would prefer not to have a barrier because of the maintenance issue it creates. There is little research as to the minimum width a median should be to eliminate the need for a barrier, however, John Lewis is comfortable that 72 feet is adequate. Chairperson Arnett asked if accidents have occurred in which vehicles have traveled across the current median width of 96 feet and into oncoming traffic. Mr. Kies responded yes. Mr. Kies noted a couple design items that do not currently exist will be incorporated in the proposed freeway, including an increased shoulder on the left side. He pointed out that the intention is to achieve a reduction in the potential for crossover accidents, stating there is no such thing as a fool-proof plan. Mr. Hayden stated the distance between the lanes is expected to provide adequate recovery time and distance, however, there is no assurance that a crossover accident will not happen. He noted one element of the study is a full analysis of the traffic component of an open median. He said, while it appears FHWA wants the median to remain open, a final decision has not yet been made.
- Chairperson Arnett expressed his opinion about the segment from Riggs Road to I-8 should be widened to allow for an HOV lane, should one be warranted in the future. Mr. Kies explained the scope of their study did not include an evaluation of multi-modal aspects and the HOV limits were provided by MAG.
- Mr. Ryan commented on the need to make provision for HOV lanes when designing the ramps.

5. Statewide Bicycle Pedestrian Plan:

Carol Slaker, Senior Transportation Planner -ADOT, explained TEA-21 recommends that bicycles and pedestrians be accommodated in the planning and design of roadway projects and FHWA provided further policy guidelines and recommends bicycle and pedestrian facilities be incorporated into all transportation projects. The study's goal was to provide a long-term plan for a statewide system of interconnected bicycle and pedestrian facilities that will guide transportation decisions. The study objectives included inventorying existing conditions, integrating regional and city bicycle and pedestrian plans into one document. A Steering Committee and Review Committee were established with more than 40 organizations and divisions represented. ADOT District and Regional Engineers were contacted in the fall of 2002 to make them aware of the project and to solicit their input. Open house meetings were held in Phoenix, Tucson, Flagstaff, Prescott, and Yuma to solicit public comments. Pedestrian and bicycle user surveys were distributed at the open house meetings and available on the website. She referred the Committee's website for further details.

Ms. Slaker explained Phase I of the study was to review existing conditions, while Phase II identified a statewide bicycle and pedestrian network and reviewed design standards and potential funding sources. Phase III of the study involves implementation of the plan, including safety, education, enforcement and marketing. A summary of the existing plans and conditions

was created using data from the State Highway Log and Highway Performance Monitoring System as well as input from District Engineers, stakeholders and users. She explained the ranking of existing conditions was based on a number of relevant criteria, including the right shoulder width, pavement type and condition, average annual daily traffic, roadway widening feasibility, percent truck traffic, speed limit and number of travel lanes. With regard to non-ADOT routes, Ms. Slaker stated major bicycling events often generate the most intensive use of a bicycle facility. She said the Arizona Bicycle Network includes ADOT State Highways, except where bicycles are specifically prohibited, and regionally significant non-ADOT facilities.

Ms. Slaker identified the design guidelines for consideration, including bike lanes, bike routes, shared use paths, pedestrian facilities, and pedestrian friendly development. Maintenance guidelines for existing bicycle and pedestrian facilities include bike lanes, routes, shared use paths, sidewalks, cattle guards, and drainage grate retrofits. Existing ADOT bicycle policies have been reviewed and a pedestrian policy is being developed for consideration.

The following questions and comments were made:

- Mr. Gawlitta asked if a policy concerning rumble strips is in place. Ms. Slaker responded yes, noting no specific recommendations have been made to change the policy. She explained the policy states that, where possible, bicycle friendly rumble strips should be used and a 10 foot opening should be provided every 30 feet.

6. Financial Update:

John McGee, ADOT, made the following report:

- HURF revenue collections for the first six months of FY 2004 totaled \$558.6 million, an increase of 4.2 percent over last year and 0.8 percent above the estimate. After deducting \$11.2 million for November fuel tax revenues, net December revenue collections totaled \$93.3 million, a decrease of 1.8 percent below last year and 5.8 percent below the estimate. The decrease in December collections was due to a delay in payments from two major fuel suppliers totaling approximately \$6.5 million. The \$6.5 million will be included in the January 2004 collections.
- For the first half of FY 2004, the Use Fuel Tax and Vehicle License Tax (VLT) revenue categories provided the majority of the growth in HURF collections. For the month of December, the Gas Tax, Use Fuel Tax and VLT revenue categories posted gains of 27.2, 27.2 and 15.3 percent, respectively, when compared to December 2002. The increase in Gas Tax and Use Fuel Tax revenues in December was due to the late November fuel supplier payments being posted in December.
- Through November, RARF collections totaled \$115.4 million, an increase of 5.7 percent above the same time period last year and 3.7 percent above the estimate. RARF revenues for the month of November were 7.2 percent above November 2002 and 5.2 percent above the estimate. The strength in RARF collections has been provided by the Retail Sales, Contracting and Restaurant and Bar revenue categories.

- Maricopa County consumer spending remained strong in November (October activity) with the Retail Sales revenue category posting an 8.8 percent increase over November 2002. Through November, Retail Sales revenue was 6.4 percent above last year.
- The Contracting revenue category continues to exceed expectations through the first five months of FY 2004, with collections tracking 9.4 percent above the same period last year.
- HURF revenue is projected to increase over the next 10 years. Last year saw the slowest growth in RARF revenue collections in the history of the tax, at .04 percent; therefore, the forecasts for 2004, 2005 and 2006 were reduced.
- The State Transportation Board approved an \$80.5 million HELP loan as part of the overall financial plan to meet the 2007 acceleration date. This will be the final HELP loan made to this program through December 31, 2004, however, additional loans will be made in 2005 and 2006. We will begin drawing down the loan and funding projects within the next few months.
- We are in the process of updating our Semi-Annual Certification of Revenues and Costs. Kwi Kang will address the issue in further detail at the next meeting. On a financial basis, the 2007 acceleration program is still on track.

7. Call to the Public:

Joe Ryan, citizen, stated the propaganda entitled "Let's Keep Moving" takes for granted that a trolley car is included. He referred to a handout outlining false information they have been given about the Light Rail system. He said the plan is not balanced and will fail to save commuters time. He suggested negotiations with the Indian Community include a scenario where the hotel/casino pays the State to have rapid transit brought to their property.

William "Blue" Crowley, citizen, stated he has a problem with the CTOC committee representing him as the public, when its Chairperson refuses to allow him to speak. He asked how the Committee can effectively advise the Legislature when there are 119 days between meetings. He expressed his opinion that the Committee has a problem adhering to the law with regard to taking compensation. He noted the Committee will be receiving a letter from Mr. Lasotta asking for copies of the decision that Mr. Arnett is a State employee.

8. Next Scheduled Meeting:

Wednesday, March 31, 2004, 4:30 p.m.
ADOT Board Room
206 South 17th Avenue
Phoenix, Arizona

9. CTOC Member Reports:

Mr. Gawlitta expressed that, given that CTOC will likely have an expanded role if the half-cent sales tax extension is passed, CTOC should make its recommendation known to the Legislature in terms of the allocation of the half-cent sales tax funds.

A motion to make a recommendation for bifurcation and a delayed vote on the half-cent sales tax extension was made by Mr. Gawlitta. The motion failed due to lack of a second.

Chairperson Arnett noted he is the third longest serving MAG Council member. He said he is convinced the plan is balanced and, although he does not necessarily agree with the Light Rail portion of the plan, he will not support an amendment or recommendation to bifurcate.

Mr. Gawlitta stated he completely believes in mass transportation, however, he feels the surveys were designed to achieve a predetermined outcome. He said the issue was initially voted down when it came before the public, but ultimately passed after the City dedicated \$1 million towards its passage. He stated those who opposed Light Rail did not have the same kind of money, therefore the issue passed. He expressed his opinion that the vote did not properly serve the public.

Mr. Gawlitta reoffered his motion to make a recommendation that the proposal for the expenditure of the allocations of the half-cent sales tax be separated into two issues, with one vote for transit issues and a separate vote on Light Rail and to delay the vote until the November election. Mr. Schwartz seconded the motion.

Mr. Ryan noted SB1082 accomplishes exactly what Mr. Gawlitta offered in his motion. He reiterated his position that the plan is not balanced and will fail to save commuters time as set forth in the Record of Decision of the Federal Government. He said the plan also falls short in terms of safety.

Mr. Crowley stated he also has problems with the plan and believes the vote should be delayed until November. He asked what the plan calls for on I-17 going north.

Upon a call for the motion, the motion to bifurcate the vote and to delay the vote until the November election failed by a vote of 3 to 2.

10. Closing comments and Adjournment:

No comments were made.

Meeting adjourned at 6:35 p. m.